

ISSUES IN BRIEF

The Cardinal Newman Society
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10 Ways Catholic Education and Critical Race Theory Are Incompatible

Today America continues to struggle with the consequences of the terrible sin of slavery and the injustice of racism. With confidence in Christ, Catholic education teaches God's will for humanity and helps students rise above hatred and injustice. But critical race theory promotes a false political ideology that aims to divide rather than heal American society.

The following are 10 ways Catholic education and critical race theory are simply incompatible, summarized from the Newman Society's Principles of Catholic Identity, Catholic Curriculum Standards and "Background on Critical Race Theory and Critical Theory for Catholic Educators" by Dr. Denise Donohue (at NewmanSociety.org).

1) Catholic education teaches from the truths of our faith and Christian anthropology. But critical race theory is a political, divisive ideology that is antithetical to the Catholic worldview.

2) Catholic education teaches the dignity of all people, made in the image and likeness of God. But critical race theory has its origins in critical theory, a Marxist inspired movement that views all things through the lens of power and divides society into oppressors and the oppressed. Critical race theory marks this division according to racial lines.

3) Charity and community are central to the mission of Catholic education. But critical race theory promotes division and forces people into competing racial groups.

4) Catholic education conforms consciences to Christ and His Church. But critical race theory imputes unconscious bias upon persons and deems racism a permanent condition.

5) Catholic education teaches that sin is an individual fault that can have devastating social impact. But critical race theory imputes guilt for "social sins" committed in the past.

6) Catholic education teaches the unity of faith and reason and helps students know and live the truth. But critical race theory is skeptical of objective truth and rejects the Western intellectual tradition. It places individual experience and cultural constructivism over reason.

7) Catholic education recognizes individual autonomy and cultivates students' capacity for reason, without regard to skin color. But critical race theory assumes that race defines how one thinks and looks at the world.

8) Catholic education observes human accomplishments and failings according to a Catholic worldview, by which racism is one element of a fallen and redeemed nature. But critical race theory demands that history be taught through the lens of race, power and privilege.

9) Catholic education favors literature that promotes understanding of the human condition across time and culture. But critical race theory demands that classic texts be set aside for contemporary literature that is narrowly focused on race and social deconstruction.

10) Catholic education respects the natural and religious rights of parents to direct the formation of their children in collaboration with the school. But critical race theory manipulates education to form children according to its narrow ideology and to reshape culture.